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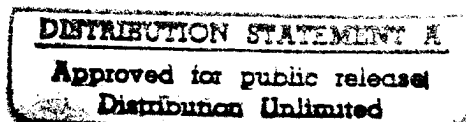
CASE STUDIES IN RESERVE COMPONENT VOLUNTEERISM:
E COMPANY REINFORCED, 2nd BATTALION,
25th MARINE REGIMENT IN GUANTANAMO, CUBA

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July 1995

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Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Reserve Affairs)



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PREFACE

This document was prepared by the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs) under a task entitled "Reserve Component Volunteerism." The objectives of the task are to determine the extent to which Reserve volunteers can support national military strategy, to identify the mission areas where Reserve volunteers can be most effectively employed, to assess the adequacy of legal justification and policy guidance for planning and programming Reserve volunteers for operational missions, and to suggest additional legislative initiatives for policy revisions that may be needed to assure access to Reserve volunteers. To achieve those objectives, IDA consulted published works and official documents and interviewed individuals involved in recent instances in which Reserve volunteers were used to perform operational missions. This document is one of a series of case studies that resulted from that research.

This document was reviewed for accuracy by some of those who were interviewed. It did not undergo internal IDA review.

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A. INTRODUCTION

At around noon on Friday, 26 August 1994, Major General James. F. Livingston, Commanding General, Marine Forces Reserve, called Colonel Kevin A. Conry, Commanding Officer, 25th Marine Regiment, and gave orders for the 25th Marines to be prepared by 1600 hours Monday, 29 August 1994, to deploy a reinforced rifle company to Cuba to provide security for internee camps at Guantanamo Naval Station. Colonel Conry assigned the mission to the 2nd Battalion, and the 2nd Battalion assigned it to E (Echo) Company. On Saturday morning, the members of Echo Company assembled and were briefed on the mission. Over the weekend, the company processed, packed, was inspected, and was ready to go by the appointed hour on Sunday. This was a routine military mission in all respects, except that the 25th Marine Regiment is a Selected Reserve organization, and the Marines that were ready to go to Cuba were Reserve volunteers.

Actually, Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 25th Marines did not deploy to Cuba on Monday, 29 August 1994, but 3 weeks later, on 25 September 1994, the unit deployed to Guantanamo, accomplished the mission for the required 30 days, and returned to CONUS on 26 October 1994. This mission was the first use of a volunteer unit by the Marine Corps Reserve and the first use of a volunteer combat unit by any of the military services since the end of the Cold War ushered in a new era for Guard and Reserve utilization.

B. MARINE FORCES RESERVE

The Marine Corps endeavors to integrate active and reserve Marines into a single, seamless Total Force. The Marine Forces Reserve is the major organization that provides trained and equipped reserve units and individuals to augment/reinforce the Active Marine Corps¹ [1]. The total strength of the Marine Forces Reserve is about 41,000 Selected Reservists and 68,000 Individual Ready Reservists [2]. The Commander, Marine Forces Reserve is on a par with the Commander, Marine Forces Atlantic, and the Commander, Marine Forces Pacific.

¹ Marine Forces Reserve is a command that includes almost all of the Marine Reservists in the Marine Reserve Force, excluding reservists assigned directly to Headquarters, Marine Corps, and Marine Corps installations and activities.

The major elements of the Marine Forces Reserve are as follows:

- 4th Marine Division,
- 4th Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW),
- 4th Force Service Support Group (FSSG), and
- Marine Corps Reserve Support Command.

An Active Component (AC) major general commands the Marine Forces Reserve. Reserve general officers command the division, aircraft wing, and FSSG. A reserve general officer also commands the Marine Corps Reserve Support Command, which commands the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). In addition, two Reserve Air-Ground Task Force Command Elements—one on the East Coast and the other on the West Coast—are each commanded by a reserve brigadier general [1].

One unique feature of the Marine Forces Reserve is the manner in which regular Marines are used to supervise, instruct, and assist Reserve units to attain and maintain combat readiness. AC Inspector-Instructor (I&I) Staff personnel are assigned at all echelons of the 4th Marine Division and 4th FSSG. Each company, battalion, and regiment has an I&I Staff that works full-time with the Reservists in the units. Each Reserve company and battalion commander has a counterpart I&I Staff officer of equal grade. Commanders of the infantry regiments are usually AC officers. While not designated as I&I Staff, AC Marines perform similar duties in the 4th MAW. AC Marines also serve in the Reserve Support Command and the two Reserve Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Command Elements. About 4,500 AC Marines support the Marine Corps Reserve, and about 2,300 Reservists serve on full-time active duty in the Active Reserve (AR) Program [1 and 2].

The Marine Corps goes to great lengths to assure that the Reserve units and individuals can contribute directly and rapidly in time of need. Marine Reservists train at the same schools and meet the same standards as those applied to active duty Marines. Almost all Marine Reserve officers have served at least three years of active duty. Marine units are issued the same equipment at the same time as the AC units. Realistic training at field exercises is stressed.

Marine Forces Reserve is designed to augment/reinforce the AC units. Augmentation involves the assignment of individual Reservists or small crews or teams to fill up the ranks of under strength active units. Reinforcement involves the provision of entire reserve units to provide additional combat or support capability. The stated intention of the Marine Corps is to obtain combat companies from the reserve to reinforce active

Marine units, but in the Persian Gulf War of 1990-1991, several reserve infantry battalions were deployed and used in the combat theater as battalions. During that war, on the other hand, most Marine Reserve support units that were called up to active duty were broken up to provide fillers for active support units [3].

C. THE 25TH MARINES

The 25th Marines headquarters is located in Worcester, Massachusetts, but its three battalions and their respective companies are located in fifteen different sites extending over a nine-state area from Ohio and West Virginia in the west and south through the Mid-Atlantic states and north to New England up to Maine. The headquarters of the three infantry battalions of the regiment are located respectively at Camp Edwards, Massachusetts; Garden City, New York; and Brookpark, Ohio. The mission of the 25th Marines is to be prepared to mobilize to augment or reinforce the Marine Corps, with particular emphasis on cold weather and mountain operations. The regiment is also ready for air movement to prepositioned equipment or, with its full set of equipment, to participate in amphibious operations. As of 24 January 1995, the 25th Marines had an actual strength of 137 officers and 2,586 enlisted personnel from the Marine Corps Reserve and another 25 officers, 168 enlisted personnel, and 16 Navy medical corpsmen from the regular component. The 25th Marines engage in an active training program using major installations, National Guard facilities, and even Canadian ranges. Training is focused on the company level, but battalion-sized exercises are conducted every year, and battalion and regimental staff training receive high priority [4 and 5].

For the Persian Gulf War, the 25th Marines was mobilized. The Regimental Headquarters and the 2nd and 3rd Battalions were stationed at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twenty-nine Palms, California, preparing to participate during March in a NATO exercise in Norway. The 1st Battalion deployed to Southwest Asia, where it was attached to the 1st Marine Division and collected enemy prisoners of war during the division's advance into Kuwait. F Company, 2nd Battalion, was detached from its battalion, deployed to Southwest Asia, and assigned to the 2nd Light Armored Infantry Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, to serve as the battalion's scouts [3].

The three rifle companies of the 2nd Battalion are stationed at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (Echo); Albany, New York (Foxtrot); and Dover, New Jersey (Golf). The Weapons Company is co-located with the Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters and Service Company at Garden City, New York.

E (Echo) Company, 2nd Battalion, is stationed at the Navy-Marine Corps Reserve Center in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The Reserve Center is a two-story, red brick structure in a quiet residential area about two blocks from the Susquehanna River. The company is at full strength. About one-third of its junior enlisted personnel are students at one of the many nearby colleges, including Penn State, and most of the other two-thirds are young people who have just entered the work force. The staff noncommissioned officers (NCOs) are older and include many skilled workers and professionals, some of whom have retired from their civilian occupations but continue to serve in the Marine Corps Reserve. On drill weekends, the Reserve Center is full of Marines going to and fro in a kind of purposeful confusion as they regroup from their previous field training exercise and prepare for the next one. Echo Company has a good reputation, and it had considerable experience in counterdrug operations. In 1993, one of Echo Company's rifle squads won the Super Squad competition to be named the best rifle squad in the 4th Marine Division. In 1994, Echo Company placed second in this competition. It was natural that the chain of command of the 25th Marines would select Echo Company for the Guantanamo Mission.

D. THE GUANTANAMO MISSION

In September 1990, the United States had established a policy of intercepting Cubans trying to escape their home island and enter the United States. The 90 miles of ocean between Cuba and Florida were crowded with desperate people in small boats and rafts fleeing to freedom. The previous policy of granting political asylum to Cuban refugees had led to a great increase in numbers as the Cuban economy deteriorated. In 1993, President Clinton revised U.S. policy so that henceforth Cuban refugees would be intercepted at sea and interned until they could be processed either for entry into the United States or returned to Cuba. Internee camps were established in Panama and at the United States Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

At Guantanamo, a Joint Task Force (JTF) commanded by Marine Brigadier General Michael J. Williams was responsible for operating internee camps for both Haitian and Cuban refugees. Internal camp operations were the responsibility of the Army and the Department of State. An infantry battalion from the 2nd Marine Division provided external security for the camps. During the summer of 1994, the number of Cubans being intercepted at sea and sent to Cuba increased significantly, and additional external security forces were needed. The Commander, JTF, wanted another infantry battalion from the 2nd Marine Division to provide external security in Cuba.

The 2nd Marine Division was in a stage of overload. The division had two battalions in Cuba, a Marine Expeditionary Unit afloat in the Mediterranean Sea, a reinforced battalion MAGTF afloat off Haiti, and was still trying to accomplish some normal training. During this same period, moreover, planning was underway for a possible operation in Haiti, in which the 2nd Marine Division could play a major role. Major General James Jones, Commanding General, 2nd Marine Division, was looking for help, and Brigadier General Ronald G. Richard, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, for Reserve Affairs, suggested the possibility of using Marine Corps Reserve volunteers to take some of the load off of the 2nd Marine Division by helping out on the external security mission in Cuba [6]. If Reservists were to be used, they would have to be volunteers, for at this time no presidential call-up authority was available and it was widely believed that no such authority would be made available for operations in Haiti.²

General Jones thought using volunteers was a good idea and initiated a request for support. The concept was that three volunteer rifle companies would be used for 30 days each on a rotational period to provide at least 90 days of augmentation. The idea of using reserve volunteers for Cuba was accepted by Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, Commander, Marine Forces Atlantic (MARFORLANT), and the mission was passed unofficially to General Livingston at Marine Forces Reserve [6].

General Livingston and Major General A. C. Harvey, Commanding General, 4th Marine Division, considered the matter and decided that the mission would be assigned to the 25th Marines. General Livingston gave the order to Colonel Conry on 26 August 1994.

When the call came setting up the mission to Guantanamo, Colonel Conry had to decide which of his three battalions would do the job. The 3rd Battalion was slated to go to cold weather training in Bridgeport, California. The 1st Battalion needed all of the time it could get to prepare for a major combined-arms live-fire exercise at Twenty-nine Palms in the summer of 1995. The 2nd Battalion had just finished the cold weather training at Bridgeport and was not scheduled for a major exercise in the near future. Moreover, the 2nd Battalion staff had the benefit of recent participation in several counter-drug missions in support of JTF-6. Colonel Conry decided that the Guantanamo mission would go to the 2nd Battalion and telephoned both Lieutenant Colonel Jere Carroll, the Battalion Commander, and Lieutenant Colonel Steve Swift, the Battalion I&I, to assign the mission.

² President Clinton did authorize the involuntary call-up of the Selected Reserve for the Haiti operation, but this authority did not extend to forces for duty in Guantanamo.

Lieutenant Colonel Swift was on leave at Lake Winnepesaukee, New Hampshire, when the mission broke, but cut his leave short and returned to Garden City when informed of the tasking. Colonel Conry specified the mission and the timing and said that he did not want a newly formed provisional unit but wanted instead to have a unit built as much as possible around a rifle company. Colonel Conry also said that the job was to be done without looking outside the 2nd Battalion for volunteers [7].

Lieutenant Colonel Carroll took quick action to implement the mission he had just received from the Regimental Commander. The decision that had to be made quickly was which companies of the 2nd Battalion would provide the two companies for this mission. Golf Company was ruled out at the outset because the company I&I had just changed. Echo Company was the largest unit, and both the company commander and company I&I were experienced. The decision was to task Echo Company for the first unit rotation in August and Foxtrot Company for the second rotation in September.

Lieutenant Colonel Swift called Captain Frank Topley, the Echo Company I&I, and Captain Topley called the Company Commander, Captain Brian Sulc. Captain Topley received the call at the Reserve Center about 1400 on Friday and immediately started calling key people on the company telephone alert roster.

Captain Sulc called Lieutenant Colonel Carroll from his home right after being notified by Captain Topley of the mission. He then went to the Reserve Center, arriving during the early evening. Marine Reservists were coming into the Reserve Center in response to the telephone alert, and Captain Sulc had a meeting with his platoon commanders about the mission. Lieutenant Colonel Carroll and Lieutenant Colonel Swift wanted the company to be called into the Reserve Center on Saturday morning, 27 August 1994, and Captain Sulc decided to call a special drill for the entire weekend extending until Sunday evening [8 and 9]. The troops were notified that the company had been alerted for an operational mission and that they were to report to the Reserve Center on Saturday morning ready to depart. They were not told on Friday evening that this was to be a volunteer mission.

About 90% of the members of Echo Company assembled at the Reserve Center at 0800 on Saturday morning. Captain Sulc explained to the assembled Marines that the mission was to pull security duty in Guantanamo for 30 days, that it was an important mission, that they were to leave Monday evening, that the unit was honored by being chosen for the assignment, and that it was a strictly volunteer mission. He appealed to their pride as Marines and stressed that this was a remarkable opportunity for them as Reservists to perform a real operational mission [8]. At the end of the briefing, Captain Sulc asked all

of those who volunteered to raise their hands. Most of those present raised their hands, and the count showed that 110 of the 178 members of the company had volunteered to go.

A simultaneous canvas of volunteers had been made of the other companies in the battalion, with similarly good results. With personnel from Weapons Company and G Company, the 2nd Battalion could deploy a TOE rifle company with 225 Reservists and 10 I&I staff personnel.

During this time, 2nd Battalion Headquarters had established that Foxtrot Company would be scheduled for the second 30-rotation, and volunteers were also solicited for this mission. The F Company commander elected to ask the unit members to volunteer over the telephone instead of asking them at a unit meeting, and the results were disappointing. Initially, only 35 members of F Company volunteered, but eventually as the situation was clarified, about 80 members of F Company volunteered to go. (As it turned out, the second rotation was assigned to the 24th Marines, and F Company did not have to go.) Captain Sulc's face-to-face solicitation of the entire assembled group brought into play group dynamics that made it easy for the Reservists to volunteer. As one commented, "It's easier to say no over the telephone."³

After receiving a report on the excellent response to the call for volunteers, Colonel Conry reported back about noon on Sunday to Major General Livingston that the mission was feasible and that Company E (-) (Reinforced), 2nd Battalion, 25th Marines, 4th Marine Division, would be ready to depart Harrisburg at 1800 on Monday.⁴

That weekend was a scene of intense activity as the Marines prepared their gear, informed employers and schools of their impending absence, placated concerned wives and children, and made the necessary financial and legal arrangements. Time was short and a lot of work had to be done. By Sunday afternoon, it was clear that the 25th Marines would be able to provide for the mission in Cuba a reinforced rifle company built around Company E.

However, at 1600 hours on Sunday, 28 August 1994, the word came down from both the Battalion and Regiment that Echo Company would not be leaving at 1800 on Monday, but that the volunteers would be placed on a 48-hour recall status for an indefinite period. They remained on recall status for 20 days.

³ According to Lieutenant Swift [10], Company F ultimately had a larger percentage of volunteers than Company E after Company F was designated lead unit for the second rotation.

⁴ This is the official designation of the unit, referred to in the text henceforth as E/2/25 [10].

The reason for the delay was merely administrative paperwork. The use of Marine Reserve volunteers was approved at all levels informally, but the formal request initiated by 2nd Marine Division had to pass through and be approved by the staffs of II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), Marine Forces Atlantic, and Headquarters, Marine Corps before the mission could start. (Although Lieutenant General Johnston commands both II MEF and MARFORLANT, he has two separate staffs, each of which had to receive, review, coordinate, and pass on the formal request to the next higher level.) Headquarters, Marine Corps, had to consider not only the operational considerations but who would pay for the Reservists [6]. General Livingston acted to get the mission going based upon the unofficial approval of all parties, but the troops would have to wait until Headquarters, Marine Corps, gave official approval and a funding citation. The reason for the delay was not passed down to the troops, so they waited and wondered when or if the mission would happen.

The cancellation of the immediate deployment caused a great deal of consternation among the members of Echo Company. The volunteers had said good-bye to their families, quit their jobs, left school, and made whatever emergency arrangements could be made in the short time available over a weekend. Two Reservists curtailed their honeymoons to go on the mission [10]. Company First Sergeant Joe Kundrat, a police officer in Frederick, Maryland, told his wife he could not attend a crab feast for a hundred guests at his own home on Monday night and told the police department that he would not be available for duty at the County Fair—the biggest police event of the year. When the deployment was postponed, First Sergeant Kundrat was uncomfortable about showing up at the party and for work⁵. Many others sacrificed their own interests for the good of the unit.

For the next three weeks, the members of the unit who were slated to go to Guantanamo were on a 48-hour string that was pulled and released several times before the mission actually started. Tentative departure dates were announced three times before the real event took place. The enlisted personnel first doubted that the mission would in fact occur, then started believing that it would not occur, just as it did occur.⁶

During this period, some of the volunteers dropped out. Some of those initially enthusiastic at the original call for volunteers began to have second thoughts during the delay. The procedure established in Echo Company was that all of the original volunteers

⁵ Information on individual Reservists obtained during a series of individual and group interviews [11].

⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Swift observes correctly that the leadership was caught between keeping the troops informed of what was going on and avoiding passing on tentative information until the decision was final [10].

would go, but that any Marine who had a good reason to stay behind would be allowed to do so. Each individual who wanted to drop out had to work through the chain of command and then talk to First Sergeant Kundrat before final approval. The First Sergeant tried to talk each into staying with the unit and played on all of the stops in doing so. Marines that had no reason other than simply not wanting to go were told that there was still a need for volunteers. Marines who would suffer large financial losses (such as students with heavy tuition already paid) or family problems, were allowed to remain behind. If the First Sergeant could not persuade a reluctant Marine to stay on, the next step was a visit to the Company Commander for more persuasion. Between the First Sergeant and the Company Commander, most of the doubters were persuaded to stay with the mission. Some Marines, who had legitimate reasons for staying back and who persisted, were given permission to "unvolunteer" [9 and 12]. Ultimately, only six of the original volunteers were excused.

From 7 to 10 September, Colonel Conry visited Camp LeJeune and accompanied Major General Jones on a two-day trip to Cuba. Colonel Conry wanted to see for himself the situation and conditions at Guantanamo and pave the way for his Reservists. There were three important consequences from this trip:

- During the trip, Colonel Conry observed that the regular companies were doing the job in Guantanamo with strengths of about 150 personnel and, after coordinating with the commander of the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines, who was performing the mission, determined that a company strength of 150 personnel would be adequate for Echo Company also. This lower strength corresponded closely to the numbers of actual volunteers from E and F companies and made it easier for the 25th Marines to accomplish the mission.
- Based on the reduced strength requirement for the mission, Colonel Conry recommended to General Livingstone, Marine Forces Reserve that the 25th Marines provide the first two companies, but that the third company be provided by another regiment. General Livingston approved this idea but later modified the arrangement so that each of the three reserve regiments would provide one company in turn—25th, 24th, and then the 23rd Marines [13].
- Finally, during his visit Colonel Conry told the 2nd Marine Division commander and the regular battalion commander in Cuba that Echo Company could do the job and would not need to be coddled. This was important, for many regular Marines were not familiar with the Reservists and—despite the excellent record of the Marine Corps Reserve in the Persian Gulf War—were unsure of their capability. Lieutenant Colonel Swift was also passing the word to his colleagues in the Active Marine Corps that these Reservists could do the job. This positive lobbying by the regular Marine officers was a major factor

contributing to the ready acceptance of the Reservists by the active Marines and the expectation that the Reservists would perform to Marine Corps standards.

Echo Company held its scheduled weekend drill on 9 and 10 September, 1994 to re-emphasize the mission and its importance. Classes were presented on the mission, and time was spent in personal processing for personnel administration, legal matters, personal gear, and equipment.

A family briefing was held on Saturday morning, 17 September, so that the wives, children, and parents would be fully informed on what was happening, why, and how they could cope. Representatives of CHAMPUS, the Red Cross, and Marine Corps administrators were there to give talks and answer questions. During the period of active duty, Mrs. Linda Kundrat, the first sergeant's wife, and Gunnery Sergeant Ted Nutaitis of the Rear Detachment operated an informal family support network that stayed in touch with the families by telephone and sponsored some meetings and events.

It was a great relief to all when the word was passed on 15 September that the unit really was going to go to Guantanamo. Final preparations were made, and orders were cut by the Second Battalion placing Echo Company on active duty for a period of 45 days. The fund cite was issued by Headquarters, Marine Corps.

On 17 September 1994, the unit assembled at Harrisburg Airport and was airlifted to its Station of Initial Assignment (SIA) at Camp LeJeune, North Carolina. The composition of E/2/25 by source of personnel at the time of deployment was as shown in Table 1. Echo company sent all five of its officers and most of its senior NCOs. A platoon commander and some NCOs joined from Weapons Company. A team of eight I&I personnel accompanied the unit, and five medical corpsmen were attached. Three officers from the 4th Civil Affairs Group, two disbursing specialists from the 4th Force Service Support Group, and one linguist—all reserve volunteers—also accompanied the unit [8 and 10].

Table 1. Composition of E/2/25 upon Deployment

	USMCR			USMC			USNR	USN	
	Officer	Enlisted	Total	Officer	Enlisted	Total	Enlisted	Enlisted	Total
E/2/25	5	95	100	1	3	4	1	1	106
Weapons/2/25	1	33	34	—	—	—	—	—	34
H&S Company/2/25	0	7	7	—	4	4	2	1	14
Others	3	3	6	—	—	—	—	—	6
Total	9	138	147	1	7	8	3	2	160

E. MISSION EXECUTION

The five-day stay at Camp LeJeune was valuable for the members of E/2/25. Not only did they receive some useful training, but they were able psychologically to leave their civilian world and enter the world of the Marine Corps—something they could not do at home station. The training focused on riot control, dealing with civil disturbances, hand-to-hand combat, physical security, and the inevitable weapons firing. The Marines thought that the training was good and that it provided them information that they needed for the Guantanamo mission.

The unit was ready to go to Guantanamo, but it was impossible to get regular airlift aircraft from Transportation Command because the Haiti Operation, which started on 16 September, was using all available lift. The 25th Marines, had been authorized direct liaison with the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing in the original tasking, and requested that Marine Reserve aircraft be made available to take Echo Company to Guantanamo. This was done, and the unit moved to its new mission on Marine Reserve C-130s [4].

Echo Company arrived at Guantanamo at dusk on 25 September 1994. By that time, the security requirements had doubled, and the security forces now consisted of two infantry battalions—2nd Battalion, 6th Marines, and 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines—and the regimental headquarters of the 8th Marines. Echo Company was met at the airfield by the Executive Officer and Sergeant Major of the 8th Marines. The next day, Echo Company joined up with the 1st Battalion, Second Marines, for whom the company would work during the tour of active duty.

As the Reservists were trucked to their area and over the next few days, they were chided by the regular Marines about their being weekend warriors and long-haired Reservists (not so!) and other mild insults. The members of E/2/25 took this as the usual harassment and ribbing given to new guys and did not take offense. After a week, the disparaging remarks and kidding about the Reserves stopped, as the AC Marines saw that the Reservists were also Marines and were doing a good job. First Sergeant Kundrat reports that he was taken into the meetings conducted by the Sergeant Major of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, had a few beers, went fishing, and was otherwise made to feel that he and his other reserve staff NCOs were part of the team [12].

For the first two days, the members of Echo Company stood or walked guard with their counterparts in the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, and at this level the cooperation was complete. On the third day, Echo Company took over physical security for two camps. Camp Bulkely held about 2,000 Cuban families with women and children. Camp

November held about 600 single males, many with military experience, who wanted to go back to Cuba and had very poor attitudes. As an exception to general mobilization procedure, the I&I Staff went to Cuba with Echo Company, but they became superfluous in about a week as the Reservists gained confidence and took over.

Living conditions for the Marines were not good—far worse than the living conditions for the Cubans in Camp Bulkely—though on a par with conditions in Camp November [14]. Both groups lived in squad tents, but the Cubans had electric lights, running water, and crude but effective latrines. When E/2/25 arrived, the regular Marines billeted next to them had no electric lights in their tents, so they went to bed at dusk or used flashlights to find their way around. The generators were there, but the work order to hook up to a lighting system either had been lost or was just too low in priority. Lance Corporal Michael W. Reinert, an electrician in civil life, volunteered to wire up the tents of E/2/25 and also the tents of all of the companies of 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines. Using pig-tail sockets and Romex wire provided by base engineering, Lance Corporal Reinert used his personal electrician's pliers to bring light to the Marines, and for his initiative and skill received a special commendation from the grateful 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines. The initiative and civilian skills of other Reservists were used to upgrade living conditions significantly, but field sanitation based on portable toilets remained poor. The most significant memory the Marines have of the mission is the odor of urine that permeated the atmosphere.

Most of the duty was dull routine, standing guard and patrolling the area outside the barbed wire and concertina that delineated the camps. Everything inside the wire was the responsibility of Army Military Police and State Department officials, who had to deal directly with the Cubans. The Cubans in Camp November were unhappy and tried to escape, even though actually getting out of Guantanamo was unlikely. There were several instances of individual Cubans going through the wire, and on one of these occasions Lance Corporal Thomas A. Kramer caught sight of an escapee, chased him, and apprehended him—a feat for which Kramer was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal from the Commander of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines. On several occasions, the Cubans threatened a mass breakout or riot, and the Quick Reaction Force (a platoon) of E/2/25 donned riot gear and advanced inside the wire to restore order. When this happened, the Reservists were standing shoulder to shoulder as the Cubans tried to run around them or penetrate the formation, but the Reservists stood their ground. On one memorable occasion, all of the Cubans inside Camp November were rioting and threatening the Americans, so the Battalion Quick Reaction Force—a company of the 1st Battalion, 2nd

Marines—was called. The sight of 150 Marines in full riot gear was awe-inspiring to the unruly Cubans, who scattered and went back to their tents.

Sergeant Machel A. Santiago, a squad leader in Weapons Platoon, was also awarded the Navy Achievement Medal from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines during the tour of duty at Guantanamo. Sergeant Santiago speaks Spanish fluently and demonstrated both courage and conviction in calming down rioting Cubans.

Navy Medical Corpsman Jeffrey Purcell managed to go along with his Marines despite the reluctance of the Navy to pay his way. Echo Company has 12 medical corpsmen from the Naval Reserve to accompany the unit in combat. When the call came for volunteers, Chief Medical Corpsman William Fletcher and HM3 Purcell volunteered to go along, but the Naval Reserve said there was no money to pay for them, and anyway they were not needed because the Naval Base at Guantanamo had sufficient medical resources to take care of any problems. The two medical corpsmen persisted, and at the last minute both were placed on 5-day orders to go with Echo Company to Camp LeJeune. At this point Chief Fletcher, who had already put in many days of active duty getting Echo Company ready to deploy, went back to Pennsylvania, while "Doc" Purcell was able to convince the authorities to let him go on to Cuba. As it turned out, it was a good thing to have a corpsman the troops trusted to make certain that the health of Echo Company received the attention it needed. HM3 Purcell screened the troop members asking for medical attention and saw to it that they went to the right place and got the right treatment [15].

Overall, Echo Company did well. There were few illnesses or injuries and no serious disciplinary problems.

On 26 October 1994, Echo Company left Guantanamo. The experienced old-timers of E/2/25 showed the new Reservists of the 24th Marines how to do the job, and then they packed up and went home. The mission had been completed successfully.

F. BACK TO NORMAL

Since its return from Guantanamo, the unit has gone back to training for its wartime mission of cold weather and mountain warfare and is scheduled to have 15 days annual training (AT) in August and (because of a scheduling twist) another 15 days in December. The junior enlisted personnel who went to Cuba say that they should receive credit for one period of this year's annual training because they were on active duty for 45 days. The senior NCOs agree that the schedule is demanding, but they support the need to get back to

training for combat. The officers just want to get in all the training they can. The unit is back to normal.

Several personal problems are left over from the mission. Lance Corporal Foye Belyea had to drop out of college and his student loans came due as a result. His efforts to find relief because his absence was due to going on active duty have been futile, and Belyea still faces a severe financial strain. Lance Corporal Charles Williams was laid off by his employer not only for volunteering but for showing up again after he was supposed to have left the first time. He has since landed a better job, thanks to the help of a fellow Marine Reservist. Many of the college students lost a full semester of schooling. Some of the colleges (notably Penn State University) were cooperative, but others were not. Several of the Reservists had just married before the mission and had to leave behind new wives, who were uncertain of their rights and responsibilities in this unfamiliar situation. But the family support system worked reasonably well, and the welcomes home in October made up for the good-byes in September [11].

The Marines who went on the mission to Guantanamo are glad that they did. Some say it was the best experience of their lives to date. They enjoyed doing the job and doing it well. On the other hand, they are not eager to do it again soon, and most say that they will not volunteer for the next one. If ordered to active duty involuntarily, they will go, since they are Marines, but volunteering has lost its appeal for the moment. There is no animosity in the company between those who went and those who stayed home. The ones who went to Cuba do have, as they say, more stories to tell [11].

Looking back on their experience, the Marine Reservists who went to Guantanamo say that the worst part was the on-again/off-again period at the start of the operation. Unlike regular Marines, Reservists have to take care of their civilian lives until they are actually on active duty. They believe that higher authorities ought to make up their minds definitely as to who, what, where, how long, and particularly when an operation involving volunteers is to start before they say anything to the Reservists or issue any mission orders.

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REFERENCES

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- [11] Series of individual and group interviews conducted at E Company by Stanley A. Horowitz, Fred Breaux, and John R. Brinkerhoff of IDA, 12 February 1995.
- [12] Interview with First Sergeant Joe Kundrat, E Company, 12 February 1995.
- [13] Letter, Colonel Kevin A. Conry, 7 March 1995.
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- [15] Interview with Hospital Corpsman, Third Class, Jeffrey Purcell, E Company, 12 February 1995.

ABBREVIATIONS

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AC	Active Component
AT	annual training
CONUS	continental United States
FSSG	force service support group
H&S	Headquarters and Service
I&I	Inspector-Instructor
IRR	Individual Ready Reserve
JTF	Joint Task Force
MAGTF	Marine Air-Ground Task Force
MARFORLANT	Marine Forces Atlantic
MAW	Marine Aircraft Wing
MEF	Marine Expeditionary Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCO	noncommissioned officer
SIA	Station of Initial Assignment
TOE	Table of Organization and Equipment
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USMCR	United States Marine Corps Reserve
USN	United States Navy

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